

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

B1 1. (currently amended) A computer based method for acquiring life history information from an applicant for employment to minimize positive response bias and enhance the veracity of the acquired life history information, comprised of:

presenting to the applicant a collection of questions related to life history information, the life history information comprising more than one life event, the question collection being comprised of a revealed stem question and at least one hidden branch question, the hidden branch question being related to the stem question; receiving from the applicant a response to the stem question and storing the stem question response in a computer database;

based on the stem question response, automatically determining whether to present the at least one hidden branch question to the applicant;

if the at least one hidden branch question is to be presented to the applicant, revealing the branch question to the applicant, receiving from the applicant a response to the branch question and storing the branch question response in the computer database; and

wherein the response to the stem question and the response to the hidden branch question are relevant to predicting a predefined negative outcome for the applicant.

2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the applicant is an applicant for a law

enforcement, criminal justice or public safety employment.

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3 – 5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) The method of claim [5]1, wherein the predefined negative outcome is an objective outcome.

7. (original) The method of claim 6, wherein the predefined objective, negative outcome is failure to complete training.

B1 8. (original) The method of claim 6, wherein the predefined objective, negative outcome is receipt of a predefined disciplinary action.

9. (original) The method of claim 6, wherein the predefined objective, negative outcome is notification of a performance deficiency.

10. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the response to the at least one stem question is comprised of descriptive information.

11. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the response to the at least one hidden branch question is relevant to at least one negative indicator.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the negative indicator is

a critical item.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the occurrence of the negative indicator is relevant to predicting the predefined negative outcome for the applicant.

14. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the stem question response cannot be altered by the applicant after completion of the question collection.

B) 15. (previously presented) A computer readable medium comprising software for acquiring life history information from an applicant for employment to minimize positive response bias and enhance the veracity of the acquired life history information, wherein the software instructs a computer to:

present to the applicant a collection of questions related to life history information, the life history information comprising more than one life event, the question collection being comprised of a revealed stem question and at least one hidden branch question, the hidden branch question being related to the stem question; receive from the applicant a response to the stem question and storing the stem question response in a computer database;

based on the stem question response, automatically determine whether to present the at least one hidden branch question to the applicant;

if the at least one hidden branch question is to be presented to the applicant, reveal the branch question to the applicant, receiving from the applicant a response to the branch question and storing the branch question response in the computer

database; and

wherein the response to the stem question and the response to the hidden branch question
are relevant to predicting a predefined negative outcome for the applicant.

16. (canceled)

17. (previously presented) The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the
negative indicator is a critical item.

18 –24. (canceled)

25. (previously presented) The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the
applicant is an applicant for law enforcement, criminal justice or public safety employment.

26. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium method of claim 15,
wherein the predefined outcome is an objective outcome.

27. (previously presented) The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the
predefined outcome is a negative outcome.

28. (previously presented) The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the
predefined negative outcome is an objective outcome.

29. (previously presented) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the predefined objective, negative outcome is the applicant's failure to complete training.

30. (previously presented) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the predefined objective, negative outcome is the applicant's receipt of a predefined disciplinary action.

31. (previously presented) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the predefined objective, negative outcome is notification of a performance deficiency.

Claims 32 – 46. (canceled)

47. (previously presented) The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the response to the at least one stem question is comprised of descriptive information.

[49] 48. (currently amended) The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the response to the at least one hidden branch question is relevant to at least one negative indicator.

[50]49. (currently amended) The computer readable medium of claim [49]48, wherein the negative indicator is a critical item.

[51]50. (currently amended) The computer readable medium of claim [50]49,

wherein the occurrence of the negative indicator is relevant to predicting a predefined outcome for the applicant.

[52]51. (currently amended) The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the stem question response cannot be altered by the applicant after completion of the question collection.

[53]52. (currently amended) A computer-based system for acquiring life history information from an applicant for employment to minimize positive response bias and enhance the veracity of the acquired life history information, comprising:

a user interface for:

B) presenting to the applicant a collection of questions related to life history information, the life history information comprising more than one life event, the question collection being comprised of a revealed stem question and at least one hidden branch question, the hidden branch question being related to the stem question;

receiving from the applicant a response to the stem question and storing the stem question response in a computer database;

a computer processor that:

automatically determines whether to present the at least one hidden branch question to the applicant based on the stem question response;

if the at least one hidden branch question is to be presented to the applicant, reveals the branch question to the applicant, receiving from the applicant a

response to the branch question and storing the branch question response in the
computer database; and

wherein the response to the stem question and the response to the hidden branch question
are relevant to predicting a predefined negative outcome for the applicant.

[54]53. (currently amended) The computer-based system of claim [53]52, wherein
the negative indicator is a critical item.

[55]54. (currently amended) The computer-based system of claim [53]52, wherein
the applicant is an applicant for law enforcement, criminal justice or public safety employment.

61 [56]55. (currently amended) The computer-based system of claim [53]52, wherein
the predefined outcome is an objective outcome.

[57]56. (currently amended) The computer-based system of claim 52, wherein the
predefined outcome is a negative outcome.

[58]57. (currently amended) The computer-based system of claim [57]56, wherein
the predefined negative outcome is an objective outcome.

[59]58. (currently amended) The computer-based system of claim [58]57, wherein
the predefined objective, negative outcome is the applicant's failure to complete training.

[60]59. (currently amended) The computer-based system of claim [58]57, wherein the predefined objective, negative outcome is the applicant's receipt of a predefined disciplinary action.

[62]60. (currently amended) The computer-based system of claim [58]57, wherein the predefined objective, negative outcome is notification of a performance deficiency.

[63]61. (currently amended) The computer-based system of claim [53]52, wherein the predefined negative outcome is selected from the group consisting of an employment event, a criminal event and a substance event.

B) [64]62. (currently amended) The computer-based system of claim [53]52, wherein the response to the at least one stem question is comprised of descriptive information.

[65]63. (currently amended) The computer-based system of claim [53]52, wherein the response to the at least one hidden branch question is relevant to at least one negative indicator.

[66]64. (currently amended) The computer-based system of claim [53]52, wherein the negative indicator is a critical item.

[67]65. (currently amended) The computer-based system of claim [53]52, wherein the occurrence of the negative indicator is relevant to predicting a predefined outcome for the

applicant.

B1 [68]66. (currently amended) The computer-based system of claim [53]52, wherein the stem question response cannot be altered by the applicant after completion of the question collection.

67. (new) The method of claim 12, wherein the critical item is based on information obtained in response to a stem question and information obtained in response to a branch question.

68. (new) The method of claim 12, wherein the critical item has been empirically related to a predefined negative outcome.

B2 69. (new) The computer readable medium of claim 17, wherein the critical item is based on information obtained in response to a stem question and information obtained in response to a branch question.

70. (new) The computer readable medium of claim 17, wherein the critical item has been empirically related to a predefined negative outcome.

71. (new) The system of claim 64, wherein the critical item is based on information obtained in response to a stem question and information obtained in response to a branch question.

72. (new) The system of claim 64, wherein the critical item has been empirically related to a predefined negative outcome.

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